ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH: THE BASIS OF HIS SCEPTICISM

by

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OUTLINE

Introduction

Arthur Hugh Clough has been almost universally regarded as a representative of the doubt and scepticism of Mid-Victorian England.[1] Many critics have pointed to his thoughtful and unorthodox considerations of moral problems and have attributed Clough's doubts, wholly or in considerable part, to the temper of his time and the spirit of the Victorian age of scientific discovery and material and industrial advance.

It is my purpose to inquire into the facts of Clough's life and the thoughts contained in his writings with a view to discovering whether these critics be right, or if not, wherein lies the truth as revealed by the preponderance of the evidence.

First, I shall try to indicate the human influences which moulded the man;

Second, I shall make a study of some of the poetry and prose in which he seems to have revealed his characteristic thought;

Third, I shall summarize the findings which prove that Clough was indeed a poet of scepticism, justifying the contention that this scepticism was dependent more upon his character and training than upon the culture of the period in which he lived.

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1. Frederick Mulhauser, Jr., Clough's "Love and Reason," Modern Philology, Vol. 42, No. 3, February, 1945, p. 174.

CHAPTER I

THE INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN PEOPLE ON CLOUGH'S THOUGHT

The Influence of Certain People on Clough's Thought

Born in Liverpool on January 1, 1819, Arthur Hugh was the second child of James Butler and Anne Perfect Clough. It was thought that his birthplace was in Rodney Street. But recent research has cast some doubt as to the authenticity of this, and seems to point to Hope Street.[1] In the winter of 1822-23 the family moved to Charleston, South Carolina, where the father pursued his business as a cotton merchant. Returning to England when Arthur was nine years old, the family sent him to school at Chester in November, 1828. In the summer of 1829 he was removed to Rugby. His eldest brother, Charles, was with him at both schools, but left Rugby before him, in 1831.

Clough entered Oxford in October, 1837. At Easter, 1842, he was elected a Fellow at Oriel, and later the same year he became a Tutor. He resigned from his duties at Oxford in January, 1848. His first published work, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, a long-vacation pastoral in hexameters, appeared the next November. Two months later Ambarvalia, a joint enterprise of Clough and his former school friend, Thomas Burbidge, was published. These were Clough's only published volumes during his lifetime. He wrote Amours de Voyage in Italy in 1849, unpublished until it appeared in the Atlantic Monthly from February to May, 1858.

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1. See Appendix.

Dipsychus was written in 1850, and Mari Magno or Tales on Board in 1861, during travels in Greece, France, and Italy. February of 1849 saw Clough the principal of University Hall, London. Two years later he met Blanche Smith, whom he married on June 12, 1854, after a year of teaching in America and a year working as an examiner in the Education Office in London. They had three children: Florence, 1858; Arthur, 1859; Blanche Athena, 1861. Clough died, and was buried, at Florence, Italy, on November 13, 1861.

Clough was influenced greatly in his thinking by persons of strong and assertive character: his mother, Dr. Thomas Arnold, Matthew Arnold, John Henry Newman, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

A. His Mother

Anne Perfect, the beautiful daughter of a Yorkshire banker,[1] was mother of four children, of whom Arthur Hugh was the second child. Because her husband's mercantile activities deprived her of his loving companionship, Mrs. Clough became the constant companion of her children, especially of Arthur.

> Arthur was constantly with my mother, and she poured out the fulness of her heart on him. They read much together, histories, ancient and modern, stories of the Greek heroes, parts of

1. John Perfect of Ponterfract. Her mother's maiden name was Catherine Maria Mosely.

> Pope's "Odyssey" and "Iliad", and much out of Walter Scott's novels. She talked to him about England,[1] and he learnt to be fond of his own country, and delighted to flourish about a little English flag he had possessed himself of. He also made good progress in French. He was sometimes passionate as a child, though not easily roused; and he was said to be very determined and obstinate. One trait I distinctly remember, that he would always do things from his own choice, and not merely copy what others were doing.[2]

Mrs. Clough was a woman of simple tastes and of a retiring nature. She was not overfond of company. She was content to sit at home with a book. Under their mother's influence, the children grew up to dislike strangers. They generally ran off to the nursery at sight of visitors.

She was very religious, frequently speaking to her children about God and Duty. She endeavored to inculcate in them her own enthusiasm for that which was noble. Her attachments were few and of great strength. "Her influence, in short, was of precisely the sort to make a conscientious and idealistic boy too conscientious and idealistic."[3]

One result of this mother-influence was that when the family went to visit its cousins on returning to England, Arthur, in the words of his sister, "could not enter into the boys' rough games and amusements."[4]

As a teacher to her children, Mrs. Clough presented history with a vividness that was gripping. She must have

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1. The family then lived in Charleston, South Carolina.
2. Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough, with a Selection from His Letters and a Memoir. Edited by His Wife, London, Macmillan, 1888, Sister Anne Jemima's Memoir, p. 4.
3. James Insley Osborne, Arthur Hugh Clough, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920, p. 12.
4. Prose Remains, p. 8.

impressed them with their family's own past greatness. For an ancestor, Sir Richard Clough, had been a merchant at Antwerp during the height of its prosperity, and the agent to Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange. The family was also connected with the Tudors and with John Calvin.

The early religious teaching Clough received remained with him. He never lost his deep appreciation of biblical stories, for he composed a number of poems on such subjects as The Mystery of the Fall, The Song of Lamech, Through a Glass Darkly, What Went Ye out for to Seek?

The strength, then, of this mother-influence upon Clough can scarcely be overestimated. Practically a constant companion to his mother during his most impressionable years, a mother who missed her husband's love and compionship while the latter was devoting his time, energy, and interest to his work as cotton merchant, Clough received more than his fair share of attention. He became shy of strangers because his mother disliked visitors. He absorbed his mother's high ideals and her conscientious nature. God and Duty were real to him with a reality hard to capture in later life but likely to leave a lasting impression on a sensitive nature. It is not unlikely that Clough, despite doubt in later years as to the validity of the Scriptures, clung tenaciously to faith in God as a result of his mother's influence upon his early life.

B. Dr. Thomas Arnold

Such intimate association with his mother during his formative years did not prepare Clough for mixing readily with others. How lonely, therefore, must have been this ten-year-old lad among a crowd of strangers at Rugby, especially as he was young for his class.

As a boarder in the School House, which was under Dr. Arnold's direct supervision, Clough came into closer contact with the headmaster and his family than was usual with junior boys. Mrs. Arnold warmed to him immediately, perhaps because of his somewhat delicate health. The boy's gentleness and likeableness made him welcome in that lady's drawing-room.

With the rest of the school, Clough listened attentively to Arnold's chapel sermons, the most powerful source of the Doctor's influence. But it was not until he entered the Sixth form in 1835 that he felt the full force of Dr. Arnold's dominating personality. Introspective and sensitive, Clough then, as his friend Stanley wrote of him in later years, "received into an unusually susceptible and eager mind the whole force of that electric shock which Arnold communicated to all his better pupils."[1]

As a teacher, Arnold inspired enthusiasm. In his

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1. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D., Fellowes, London, 1868, Vol.2, pp. 35-36.

constant emphasis, both in the classroom and in the chapel, on the calls of Duty, the headmaster was to Clough an echo of the early lessons of his mother. But the echo was greatly intensified because expressed by a much more forceful personality, and with more obvious practical application. Dr. Arnold, as Bagehot once vigorously said, "Worked, he pounded, if the phrase may be used, into the boy a belief, or at any rate, a floating confused conception, that there are great subjects, that there are strange problems, that knowledge has an indefinite value, that life is a serious and solemn thing."[1]

While giving due prominence to the classics, Arnold deprived them of their exclusiveness by introducing various other branches into his course. He was particularly careful that the education which he furnished at Rugby should be in the highest sense moral and Christian. Rugby School became crowded beyond any former precedent. Its pupils carried off a large proportion of prizes at the universities. The superiority of Dr. Arnold's system became so generally recognized that it may be justly said to have done much for the general improvement of the public schools of England.

Charles Henry Pearson, Fellow of Oriel and later Education Minister in Victoria, said Arnold had,

> ...a dangerous propensity to impel his pupils into Holy Orders... I cannot doubt that Clough, almost the ablest of Arnold's pupils, though he escaped ordination, owed much of his morbid

1. Walter Bagehot, Literary Studies, two volumes, Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1898. Vol.2, p. 268.

> scrupulousity to the Rugby influence...Arnold's pupils lived in a state of priggishness. They were taught to be always feeling their moral muscles, always careful about their schoolfellows' morality, and always mindful of the high mission which they took with them into the world as Rugby boys....[1]

Clough's Rugby life was fertile soil for fostering the preoccupation with morality and religion implanted in him by his mother. Here, as at home, he lived under constant incitement to emulate the loftiest models of Christian conduct. Being singled out by Dr. Arnold as desirable material for leadership, Clough was encouraged to assume a feeling of accountability for the morals of the entire school. He was Arnold's favorite as distinctly as he had been his mother's.

Dr. Arnold died suddenly in 1842, at the age of forty-seven. "He was for a long time more than a father to me," said Clough.[2] He left Oxford on hearing the news, went home, and then to the hills of Wales for a period of solitary wandering.

Like the piling of Ossa on Pelion was the double-weight of Clough's mother's early influence followed by the similar admonitions of Dr. Arnold to be noble to the noble in himself, to be moral and Christian, to ever seek to inculcate noble ideals in the minds of his schoolfellows.

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1. Hugh Lunn Kingsmill, Matthew Arnold, The Dial Press, New York, 1928, p. 28.
2. Goldie Levy, Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861), London, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1938, p. 42.

Clough wrote to his friend, J. N. Simkinson, on January 18, 1836:

> ...I verily believe my whole being is soaked through with the wishing and hoping and striving to do the school good, or rather to keep it up and hinder it from falling in this, I do think, very critical time, so that all my cares and affections and conversation, thought, words, and deeds, look to that involuntarily....[1]

This same wishing and hoping and striving to do good were in perfect accord with the teachings of both Mrs. Clough and of Dr. Arnold. A third influence was to enter Clough's life while he was in his teens. And his friend was to be four years his junior.

C. Matthew Arnold

Matthew Arnold was the most noteworthy among Clough's younger friends. He entered his father's school in the summer preceding Clough's last year of residence. But they had known each other while Matthew was living at home and during vacations from earlier schooling at Winchester.

It was Matthew who, in Thyrsis, did more than any other man has done to perpetuate Clough's memory. Thyrsis does not really say much about Clough, less even than Lycidas does about Edward King. But Arnold admits, in reply to an objection of Principal Shairp's, that it was only one side, and a less important side of Clough, that

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1. Poems and Prose Remains, Vol. 1, p. 67.

he had in mind. "There is much in Clough," Matthew wrote to Shairp, "(the whole prophet side, in fact) which one cannot deal with in this way, and one has the feeling, if one reads the poem as a memorial poem, that not enough is said about Clough in it; I feel this so much that I do not send the poem to Mrs. Clough. Still Clough had his idyllic side, too; to deal with this suited my desire to deal again with that Cumner country; anyway, only so could I treat the matter this time."[1]

Although Clough had known Matthew Arnold at Fox How, Dr. Arnold's home in the Lake Country, and for a short time at Rugby, it was at Oxford that the friendship of these two poets ripened. In November, 1841, Matthew went up as a Balliol Scholar. The death of Dr. Thomas Arnold some eight months later tightened the bonds of sympathy and affection between Clough and Matthew.

> One sees from that time a paternal note, sincere but light enough not to become offensive, come into his every reference to Matt Arnold.
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> During the time Matthew Arnold knew him at Oxford he was falling back upon his own morality and character, where the intuitions of his faith lay, and thinking less about positive proofs and the importance of them. In fact, Arnold was going through the same process, endeavouring to find some new statement of faith that had ceased to repose under dogma and creed. Both were hunting for 'higher, holier things than these'.[2]

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1. Levy, Op. Cit., p. 209.
2. Howard Foster Lowry, The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, Oxford University Press, London, 1932, p. 23.

Four Rugby friends at Oxford formed a little company of their own. These were the Arnold Brothers, Matthew and Thomas, and Clough, and Theodore Walrond. They spent many happy hours exploring the country around Oxford, bathing in the abandoned lasher-pass and skiffing up the Isis and Cherwell. Memorials to those days are Matthew's "Scholar Gypsy" and "Thyrsis".

> "You alone of my brothers," Matthew once reminded Thomas, "are associated with that life at Oxford, the freest and most delightful part, perhaps, of my life, when with you and Clough and Walrond I shook off all the bonds and formalities of the place, and enjoyed the spring of life and that unforgotten Oxfordshire and Berkshire country. Do you remember a poem of mine called 'The Scholar Gypsy'? It was meant to fix the remembrance of those delightful wanderings of ours in the Cumner Hills."[1]

The influence of Matthew Arnold upon Clough has been noted in a leading article, unsigned, called "Arnold and Clough", as follows:

> Clough was the senior man by four years. He had been the Admirable Crichton of Rugby, and had gone to Oxford with a halo about him, bearing the expectations of gods and men, of masters and boys, that he would, as Arnold himself puts it, be "as profoundly impressive and interesting to the world as he was to us."... But it is clear that in Arnold's own early development Clough was a major influence. ... But it was the younger man who first saw his way clear, and it is curious to observe in these letters how it was he who came to take upon himself the office of mentor, and to stimulate a lagging spirit to realize itself, and to make the accomodation with the laws of existence which he felt to

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1. Levy, *Op. Cit.*, p. 44.

> be a condition for all fruitful activity. We must do something, even if we cannot do just what we would. "I do not say I discern the right way for you: have we one?...You ask me in what I think or have thought you going wrong: in this: that you would never take your assiette as something determined and final and unchangeable for you and proceed to work away on the basis of that: but were always poking and patching and cobbling at the assiette itself -- could never finally -- as it seemed -- 'resolve to be thyself'[1] --but were looking for this and that experience and doubting whether you ought not to adopt this or that mode of being of persons qui ne vous valaient pas because it might possibly be nearer the truth than your own: you had no reason for thinking it was, but it might be -- and so you would try to adapt yourself to it. You have I am convinced lost infinite time in this way: it is what I call your morbid Conscientiousness -- you are the most conscientious man I ever knew: but on some lines morbidly so, and it spoils your action."[2]

Clough and Arnold were remarkably alike in nature and in training. Children of religious parents, they early undertook to look upward and to lend a hand. The seeds of faith planted in Clough's heart by his mother were dutifully nurtured by the father of Matthew Arnold. Secure in the childhood faith learned at their mothers' knee, the two boys went up to Oxford -- to find there that the last word had not been said in the matter of faith. Clough was to continue his quest, seeking for God while questioning the pronouncements of organized theology. Arnold was to learn to accept -- not Nature's God, but Nature.

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1. Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,
   Who finds himself, loses his misery!
is the conclusion of Arnold's poem, "Self-Dependence."
2. The Times (London) Literary Supplement, Jan. 12, 1933, pp.1, 2.

D. John Henry Newman

The Church of England in the early part of the nineteenth century was in a condition in which reform was sorely needed. The fervid spirit of John Wesley and his followers had kept the spark of spiritual life glowing in the heart of the working people. The Roman Catholic Church, as a consequence of Catholic Emancipation, was rehabilitating itself. A group in the Church of England undertook to purge their Church of its growing scepticism and liberalism, restore its discipline, and protect it from losing its dignity and authority through government regulation and control. Because of the circumstances of its origin at Oxford University, the reform came to be known as the Oxford Movement. It is also called the Tractarian Movement because its leaders carried on their battle in Tracts for the Times, a series of ninety pamphlets, from 1833 to 1841.

The movement began with a famous sermon on "national apostasy" preached at Oxford by John Keble on July 14, 1833. The leadership was immediately assumed by John Henry Newman, the most able of the reformers and the most vigorous tractarian. Newman's logical processes led him ultimately to Roman Catholicism. After a final tract, number ninety, had raised a storm against him, Newman resigned his Oxford position and four years later joined the Catholic Church. His successor as leader of the Tractarian Movement was Edward Bouverie Pusey, who directed the reform away from controversial channels. His followers were called Puseyites.

So keenly interested did Clough become in arguments about Tractarianism, after coming under the influence of Newman at the university, that he allowed himself to neglect his studies. After six months at Balliol, Clough admitted that he liked the views of the Newman followers better than he did earlier. With reverence and humility he recorded in his diary that Newman's "errors as we believe them to be must not make me ever forget how far he is above me in goodness and piety, and wisdom, too -- tho' in certain points we with less power may by our advantages be nearer the real truth, and though less wise have more wisdom."[1]

The growing influence of Newman on Clough is evidenced in a letter to Gell, dated Balliol, May 8, 1838, in which Clough wrote as follows:

> ...And it is no harm, but rather good, to give oneself up a little to learning Oxford people, and admiring their good points, which lie, I suppose, principally in all they hold in opposition to the Evangelical portion of society -- the benefit and beauty and necessity of forms -- the ugliness of feelings put up unnaturally soon, and consequently kept up by artificial means, ever strained and never sober. I should think very likely, too, their anti-Calvinistic views of justification were, if not just, at least very useful to lead us to the truth. I should be very sorry ever to be brought to believe their further views of matter acting on morals as a charm of sacramentalism, and the succession-notion so closely connected with it. All this, and their way of reading and considering scripture -- such a contrast to the German fashions -- rests, I suppose, entirely on their belief in the infallibility of the Church down to a certain period, to which they are led by a strong sense of the necessity of some infallible authority untied with a feeling of the insufficiency of the New Testament. Indeed, I think a good deal of what they say as to this latter point is stronger

1. Levy, op. cit., p. 42.

> than anything I ever heard against it. Newman is now giving lectures on the Mystical Power of the Sacraments, and seems to have stated the objections to it Scripturally in a very fair and candid manner. If I had said a quarter of this to ----, he would have set me down at once for a thorough-going convert ad Newmanismum. But you will not be so rash; and you remember that you asked me to write about it. . . .[1]

Early in December of the same year, Clough again mentioned Newman to Gell, telling of meeting Newman once at a dinner-party and once at a small and select breakfast, adding that on the strength of these meetings, "I must turn Newmanist." Clough continued:

> Concerning the Newmanitish phantasm, as some people term the Church, I do not know very much; but perhaps you may be enlightened a little, and even softened by the knowledge that Newman (I believe decidedly in words, and certainly his real notion is such) holds the supremacy of the aute kath auren eilikrines dianoia,[2] but says that submission to a divinely-appointed body of teachers and governors, to wit, bishops and presbyters and deacons, is the course that is pointed out to us by the aforesaid eilikrines dianoia: inasmuch as it is evident to the reason from the circumstances of the case, &c., that the preponderance of probabilities is for this view, viz. that Christian privileges and covenanted salvation have been attached to the use of certain forms and sacraments whose only qualified administrators are the Apostles' successors, the clergy; and that these gifts and graces cannot be obtained except through the medium of these divinely-appointed priests. All persons therefore who wilfully refuse to receive God's blessings through this channel are guilty of very great sin, and put out of the covenanted privileges of Christians. . . .[3]

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1. Poems and Prose Remains, p. 77.
2. according to the light of uncorrupted belief.
3. Poems and Prose Remains, p. 80.

Newman's persuasive power may have had nore effect upon him than Clough as an undergraduate was then willing to admit. Dean Boyle, in his Recollections, wrote years later that Clough said to him that: "... the grip which Newman seemed to get on the conscience was greater and stronger even than that of Arnold."[1]

Three strong moral and religious influences, then, played upon the growing boy. His mother taught him piety and goodness, and he was obedient to her teaching in thought and act. The intensity was heightened as Dr. Arnold moulded Clough into a passionate belief in Rugby and in the Broad Churchmanship of the great schoolmaster. The basis of these two influences combined the workings of an inner conscience with "doing good" to his fellowmen. But the stronger influence of John Henry Newman led Clough to question the true basis of his own faith. Newman's stress upon the authority of the Church, his insistence in the belief in a divinely authorized priesthood, tore Clough adrift from his spiritual and intellectual anchorage.

Perhaps the strongest element in Clough's nature was his religious instinct. He loved purity and goodness with all his heart. But because of the impact of these diverse religious influences, he could find no intellectual foundation for a positive faith. He drifted into the open sea of doubt, suffering torment in his longing to believe.

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1. Levy, Op. Cit., p. 30.

In their common seeking for truth, Clough and Matthew Arnold were drawn closely together. They held in common a love of Oxford, of Nature, of the Classics, of poetry and a desire for Truth. Little wonder that they heard and heeded a Voice from over the Western Ocean. It was a Voice heard in the vast solitude of London Town by a Scotsman who called no man master, save Goethe. Carlyle wrote:

> My Friend! You know not what you have done for me there. It was long decades of years that I heard nothing but the infinite jangling and jabbering, and inarticulate twittering and screeching, and my soul had sunk down sorrowful, and said there is no articulate speaking any more, and thou art solitary among stranger-creatures? and lo, out of the West comes a clear utterance, clearly recognizable as a man's voice, and I have a kinsman and brother: God be thanked for it! I could have wept to read that speech; the clear high melody of it went tingling through my heart.[1]

E. Ralph Waldo Emerson

Emerson's Phi Beta Kappa speech, to which Carlyle was referring, was delivered at Harvard on August 31, 1837. The American Scholar should be man thinking, not a mere thinker, or, worse still, the parrot of other men's thinking. Three main influences are Nature, the Past (as typified in Books), and Action. Clough and Arnold often discussed the philosophy of Emerson. They three were kindred spirits. Sixteen

1. Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, quoted by Bliss Perry in The Praise of Folly and Other Papers, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1923, pp. 96-97.

years before Clough resigned his Tutorship at Oriel because of moral scruples regarding the signing of the Thirty-Nine Articles, Emerson had resigned his pastorate of the Second Church of Boston (Unitarian) when he found himself at variance with his deacons upon a point of doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper. For the next thirty years, Emerson turned his lecture desk into a pulpit and preached righteousness there.

High-minded himself, Clough attracted and was attracted to men of noble mien and sterling principles. He was delighted when he heard in November, 1847, that his sister had met Emerson, who had recently arrived in England on a lecture tour. With unusual boldness, he warmly invited the Sage of Concord to visit him at Oxford. "Your name is not a thing unknown to us," Clough assured him. "I do not say it will be a passport in a society fenced round by church-articles. But amongst the juniors there are many that have read and studied your books and not a few that have largely learnt from them and would gladly welcome their author."[1]

Toward the end of Clough's last term as an Oriel tutor, to his delight Emerson accepted his long-standing invitation to visit Oxford. He wrote afterwards, in a letter to his friend Tom Arnold, dated July 16, 1848:

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1. Levy, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

> The next topic is Emerson, whom I left yesterday on the deck of the Halifax steamer, and saw pass rapidly down the Mersey on his way home.
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> He came to Oxford just at the end of Lent term, and stayed three days. Everybody liked him, and as the orthodox mostly had never heard of him, they did not suspect him; he is the quietest, plainest, unobtrusivist man possible; will talk, but will rarely discourse to more than a single person, and wholly declines 'roaring.' He is very Yankee to look at, lank and sallow, and not quite without the twang; but his looks and voice are pleasing nevertheless, and give you the impression of perfect intellectual cultivation, as completely as would any great scientific man in England -- Faraday or Owen, for instance, more in their way perhaps than in that of Wordsworth pr Carlyle. I have been with him a great deal; for he came over to Paris and was there a month, during which we dined together daily; and since that I have seen him often in London, and finally here. One thing that struck everybody is that he is much less Emersonian than his Essays. There is no dogmatism or arbitrariness or positiveness about him.[1]

During that month together in Paris they saw the famous Rachel,[2] about whom Matthew Arnold waxed so

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1. Poems and Prose Remains, Vol. 1, p. 133.
2. Rachel (Elisha Rachel Felix), French tragédienne. Her father was an Alsatian Jew, naturalized in France, and after much wandering about Europe in his trade of peddling, established his family at Lyons, where the two oldest children, Sarah and Rachel, sang and begged in the streets and in cafés to help out the family support. About 1830 they removed to Paris and the two girls sang on the boulevards until discovered by Etienne Choron, teacher in the School of Sacred Music, who undertook to teach them singing. Rachel's voice was found to be too harsh for this, and in 1834 Choron induced his friend, Saint Aulaire, to train her voice for the stage. On the advice of M. Samson she entered the Consevatoire, where, however, her harsh

enthusiastic, in Phêdre at the Theatre de la République. At first Clough felt disappointed in her performance, but he went again and again to see her act and to hear her chant in the Marseillaise.

It would be interesting and it might be illuminating to to consider the reasons why Matthew Arnold praised Rachel's art so highly and why Clough visited the theatre time after time to see her and to hear her. But that does not fall within the province of this study. Let it be sufficient to point out that both were not only proper young men, but that the cerebral development of each was far in advance of the emotional development. When a river is unobstructed, it meanders gently from its source to the ocean. But let it be dammed, and the power that gathers behind its flood-gates can scarcely be held in

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voice and small stature seemed at first against her. In 1838 she joined the company of the Théatre Francais and made her first appearance as Camille in Corneille's Horace. She appeared in several parts successively and finally repeated in September her performance of Camille, and was seen and applauded by the powerful critic of the Debats, Jules Janin, and her position established. After appearing in other parts in the French classic drama with increasing success, she visited England in 1841 and again in 1842, repeating her triumphs there. Her great reputation was made in five or six roles of the ancient classic drama of France, of these Phêdre being accounted her greatest. She excelled especially in the impersonation of evil passion. Both her voice, which through careful training had been changed from its former harshness to remarkable flexibility and melodiousness, and her restrained majestic acting, resulted in a rendition of her parts which was as perfect as it was thrilling.

check. Arnold and Clough received their emotional catharsis vicariously.

On that fifteenth of July, when Clough was bidding Emerson good-by, he sadly remarked: "Think where we are. Carlyle has led us all out into the desert, and he has left us there." Emerson gravely placed his hand upon Clough's head and declared importantly: "I consecrate you Bishop of all England. It shall be your part to go up and down through the desert to find out these wanderers and to lead them into the promised land."[1]

This story is often quoted to show Emerson's early appreciation of Clough's qualities of leadership. But it was another promise unfulfilled. Emerson gauged correctly Clough's latent ability, but he did not reckon on that side of Clough's nature that hesitated to act until all knowledge should be discovered.

Five months later, upon reading The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, Clough's first published poem, Emerson remarked: "This genius of Clough. How excellent, yet how slow to show itself. He gave no hint of all this to me, and I learned to esteem him for reticent sense, for solidarity and tenacity, after he had given proof of his

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1. Edward Everett Hale, James Russell Lowell and His Friends, Houghton Mifflin Company, Cambridge, Mass., 1899, p. 136.

apprehensiveness and of his thorough Oxford culture, which was manifest enough. An Oxonian is a kind of nobleman, of course. Then he had that interest in life and in realities, in the state of woman and the questions so rife in Paris through Communism, that through the old loose and easy conventions of that city for travellers; he talked so considerately of the grisette estate that I found him the best pièce de rêsistance, and tough adherence, that one could desire."[1]

As one of the results of this friendship, Clough wrote to Emerson four years later to learn if, in the latter's judgment, there was a chance of earning a living "anywhere between the Atlantic and the Mississippi, by teaching Latin, Greek, or English,"[2]

Near the end of July, Clough received a letter from Emerson strongly urging him to come to America. Clough left Liverpool by steamer on October 30, 1852, and arrived in Boston harbor at sunset on Friday, November 12, following an overnight stop at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Clough did not remain long in Boston, but went immediately to Emerson at Concord.

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1. Levy, Op. cit., pp. 76-77.
2. Lowry, Howard Foster and Rusk, Ralph Leslie, Emerson-Clough Letters, The Rowfaut Club, Cleveland, Ohio, 1934, Letter 10, of June 17, 1852.

Emerson's friendship opened many doors to Clough in Boston, Cambridge, and Concord. During the eight months the English poet remained in this country, he was entertained by Lowell, Longfellow, the Ticknors, and the Nortons. But the longing to be home in England, the desire to marry and to settle down and raise a family, a rheumatic ailment aggravated by the New England climate, all conspired to send him back home to England. Added to this was an offer for steady employment in the Education Office in London which would accelerate his proposed marriage. But while Emerson's philosophy may have steadied Clough and might possibly have given the Briton a sense of the consciousness of being not alone in his groping after the light, it was not of a kind to help Clough come to a final and definite decision in religion.

Summary

A passionate longing after nobler things was inculcated in Clough by his mother, who held him to her side and kept him away from the rough tussling of other boys. He was conscientious to a fault and formed the habit of weighing his actions and thoughts in the light of conscience. This feeling was strengthened by the Rugby influence of Dr. Arnold, whose high standards of scholarship and morality did much for the

general improvement of the public schools of England.

Newman exerted a moral influence, too, perhaps stronger than Arnold's. But this latter influence stressed the sacerdotal theory of religion, the authority of the Church as the only criterion of truth. Clough could not accept the Church's fiat. But he recognized the noble and upright nature of his new teacher, listening to Newman's sermons the while trying to bring his mind to accept. But he was unable to make final decisions until all the evidence was in.

Matthew Arnold tried, and in a measure succeeded, in rousing Clough from his despair and doubt. But Matthew, himself, was not standing upon too secure a foundation. Arnold got relief from despair by getting it off his chest -- by making known his despair and so relieving his nerve centers of an unprofitable sort of emotion. Clough, who had been taught by his mother, by Dr. Thomas Arnold, and by John Henry Newman that despair was unmanly, set out to sing that God, if not indeed in His heaven, was nonetheless somewhere about. But the song was strained a bit to match the melody.

Emerson and Clough were mutually attracted. "I more and more recognize his superiority to everybody

I have seen,"[1] wrote Clough while in the United States. This was high tribute by a man who had known Dr. Arnold and Newman, William George Ward, Thoreau, Tennyson, A. P. Stanley, Herbert Spencer, Carlyle -- to mention only a few of those with whom Clough was more or less acquainted.

Clough deliberately chose for his friends only those men of the highest ideals. He sensed in others the qualities he admired. It is likely that had he possessed more of the surety of Emerson, he might indeed have led perplexed young men out of the desert and into the Promised Land.

1. Poems and Prose Remains, Vol. I, p. 207.

CHAPTER II

HIS THOUGHT AS REVEALED IN HIS WRITING

His Thought as Revealed in His Writing

Clough made his earliest appearance as a poet in the Rugby Magazine. This was in 1836. Twelve years later he brought out his first volumes of verse. In November, 1848, after his resignation from Oriel, he published The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich. This was followed two months later by Ambarvalia, a collection of twenty-nine of his lyrics published jointly with those of a former Rugby school friend, Thomas Burbidge.

One way to judge the characteristics of a man is through his work. The lyric and idyllic side usually appears in his poetry. The intellectual side characteristically emerges in formal prose. And his letters present a more personal picture. Clough's poetry and his letters form a considerable part of his writings. His prose is scanty, but thoughtful.

A. POETRY

1. Early Poems

Blank misgivings grip the soul of this youth of twenty-two as Clough, in 1841, utters his despairing cry. It is the fifth stanza of the early poem entitled, "Blank Misgivings of a Creature Moving about in Worlds not Realized."

> How often sit I, poring o'er
> My strange, distorted youth,
> Seeking in vain, in all my store,
> One feeling based on truth;

Amid the maze of petty life
A clue whereby to move,
A spot whereon in toil and strife
To dare to rest and love.
So constant as my heart would be,
So fickle as it must,
'Twere well for others as for me
'Twere dry as summer dust.
Excitements come, and act and speech
Flow freely forth; -- but no,
Nor they, nor ought beside can reach
The buried world below.[1]

The stars above, to other men an inspiration and a delight, revealing to them in the music of the spheres high purposes to be fulfilled in the strength of the living God who holds the heavens in His hands, seemed to Clough but to reproach his feeble hesitancy and his failure to keep past promises. Fear comes with light. Clough feels a need to creep within the folds of darkness -- to be hidden from the penetrating light. Here are other lines from "Blank Misgivings ...":

O kind protecting Darkness! as a child
Flies back to bury in its mother's lap
His shame and his confusion, so to thee,
O Mother Night, come I! within the folds
Of thy dark robe hide thou me close; ...[2]

While Clough was at the university, there were many able men who said that the whole of life, regarding the soul, was but a reflection of the physiological processes of blood and nerve and sinew. Therefore faith, imagination, prayer, and poetry are but the vain mirage of a materialistic

1. Arthur Hugh Clough, Poems, London, Macmillan and Company, 1879, p. 10.
2. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

world. What if this were true? And yet he knew nothing by which to refute it. But if it were true, then how cruel the gods who thus deluded mankind! This thought is contained in "There Are More Things in Heaven and Earth", also called "Wen Gott Betrügt, Ist Wohl Betrogen" (Whom God Deludes Is Well Deluded), undated as to composition, as follows,--

> Is it true, ye gods, who treat us
> As the gambling fool is treated;
> . . . . . .
> Is it true, ye gods who cheat us?
> And that's the way ye treat us?
>
> Oh say it, all who think it,
> Look straight, and never blink it!
> If it be so, let it be so,
> And we will all agree so;
> But the plot has counterplot,
> It may be, and yet be not.[1]

Written in 1839, "Revival" indicated that the young poet was seeking to recapture the song which theology and philosophy had made elusive:

> So I went wrong, ...
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Once again
> My heart is hot within me, and me seemed
> I too had in my body breath to wind
> The magic horn of song; I too possessed
> Up-welling in my being's depth a fount
> Of the true poet-nectar whence to fill
> The golden urns of verse.[2]

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1. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
2. Ibid. p. 5.

Clough's battle during these early years seems to have been between common sense and open-mindedness on the one hand and, on the other, adherence to some set of principles devised and maintained by deliberate act of the will. His emotions and his imagination went out to Oxford and to Oxford's traditional ways. But his honest and persistent mind pulled him steadily toward common-sense and open-mindedness. He very definitely associated action with the acceptance of one or the other of two sets of principles: Newman's or Arnold's. Open-mindedness, on the other hand, meant to him a sort of patient waiting for a revelation. Because the revelation never came, conduct, to Clough, was almost entirely a matter of expressing opinions.

Before Clough could begin his important work, he must have settled opinions. He could have these by submitting his judgment to his will, in Newman's fashion. But to place will above judgment was a step he was temperamentally incapable of taking. Will was Clough's human self. To accept and reject opinions by act of will was to commit the deadly sin of Pride.

It is this pride Clough is crying out against in "The Higher Courage", an early poem obscure in thought and crude in expression, but bearing the signs of the battle between faith and doubt:

> Come back again, my olden heart! --
> Ah, fickle spirit and untrue,
> I bade the only guide depart
> Whose faithfulness I surely knew;
>
> . . . . . .

Come back again, old heart! Ah me!
Methinks in those thy coward fears
There might, perchance, a courage be,
That fails in these the manlier years;
Courage to let the courage sink,
Itself a coward base to think,
Rather than not for heavenly light
Wait on to show the truly right.[1]

The higher courage, according to the implications of this seven-stanza poem written in 1840, is to remain rudderless among shifting currents, to appear to other men to be indecisive and lacking in convictions.

The side of Clough's nature which, even in this time of doubt and hesitation, thirsted for action, finds expression in "A Golden Key on the Tongue." Here for the first time he longs for the turmoil of the world, for human relationships, for work, for excitement. Life is to be wasted not on poesy, nor revery, nor on "some vain mate." The concluding lines of this poem are:

Heaven guide, the cup be not, as chance may be,
To some vain mate given up as soon as tasted!
No, nor on thee be wasted,
Thou trifler, Poesy!
Heaven grant the manlier heart, that timely, ere
Youth fly, with life's real tempest would be coping;
The fruit of dreamy hoping,
Is, waking, blank despair.[2]

In his early poetry, Clough sought in vain for "one feeling based on truth." He had been at Oxford four years, living, as he said, amid the maze of petty life. Because he can find no assurance that truth will be his, he invites the folds of darkness to shelter him: "O Mother Night... within the folds Of thy dark robe hide thou me close...."

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1. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
2. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

If life is only atoms and molecules in motion, if God has deluded man, then man could have been deluded by no greater force. But somehow, Clough believes, there is more to it than that. Or is there? "It may be, and yet be not." Rare lyric quality appears when Clough strives to recapture his song: "...I too had in my body breath to wind The magic horn of song...a fount of the true poet-nectar whence to fill the golden urns of verse." But there is disillusion here, akin to the disillusionment felt in "The Higher Courage" when Clough seeks the return of his olden heart. But there may be some good in being up and doing, because "The fruit of dreamy hoping Is waking, blank despair." But Clough does not get up to do, because he is waiting for further evidence.

2. Ambarvalia

Two subjects occupy Clough in Ambarvalia, a volume published in company with his old Rugby friend, the Reverend Thomas Burbidge, in 1849. These subjects are Duty and God. Three of Clough's religious poems in this volume assert a similar idea of God. All ring with intense feeling and with solemn sincerity. According to this view, God is as a spirit living within a human spirit.

In the first of these poems, "The New Sinai", Clough cries out his scorn that man wishes to see his god in first this and then that person or thing in the world of phenomena. Man's need now is to reject all the long line

of man-created images of God. Carlyle would have a new and better image created. Clough wants to terminate the image-making process.

Clough asserts his faith in this poem. It is not a sure faith, indeed, but a faith hidden as yet in thick blackness, undiscernable by man. It is a faith that shall shine forth in more blessed days, giving to man the joy, the inspiration, the high shining purpose without which human life is a bitter tragedy.

Clough remembers how, in olden days, Moses was hidden in the dark gloom of Sinai and the people made themselves a golden calf. He remembers, too, that God was giving Moses, the while, revelation of a loftier, purer faith than the world had before known. Is there even now no God behind the thick veil of cloud? Is there no God who is communicating to chosen souls the faith that is to be?

You cannot know, you cannot see, Clough affirms in this poem. But you are to reject these priestly doctrines that are thrust upon you. Do not join the clamor around the golden calf. Wait until the light at last shall burst from the mountain peak of Sinai -- when the word that is to be finds proclamation in the soul of man.

Excerpts cannot do justice to this poem's thought. A few lines may indicate its subject. These are from the final stanza:

> Devout, indeed! that priestly creed,
> O Man, reject as sin;
> The clouded hill attend thou still,
> And him that went therein.
> He yet shall bring some worthy thing

For waiting souls to see:
Some sacred word that he hath heard
Their light and life shall be;
. . . . . .[1]

The second of these three outstanding religious poems in Ambarvalia is "Qui Laborat, Orat." Although faith is hard to come by, surely if there is a God atop Mount Sinai, He must also be in the breasts of men dwelling on the plain below, could me but read their own secret souls. Perhaps the trouble comes from trying to drag the hidden Deity from his shrine within the inmost spirit of man, to define, describe, and name. And word of the tongue or thought of the mind is inadequate to shape Him as He really is.

And so Clough renounces any attempt to think God out. He is even willing to forego all conscious feeling that He is there if only God will silently remain within the sanctuary.

One stanza from the third of the religious poems, titled "Humnos Aumnos" (Song of Songs), adds another deft stroke to the canvas, paints of the unknown and perhaps unknowable God:

O Thou, in that mysterious shrine
Enthroned, as I must say, divine!
I will not frame one thought of what
Thou mayest either be or not.
I will not prate of 'thus' and 'so',
And be profane with 'yes' and 'no',
Enough that in our soul and heart
Thou, whatsoe'er thou may'st be, art.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 50.
2. Ibid., p. 52.

3. Dipsychus

Clough strove to point out in Dipsychus the battle between good and evil, between faith and doubt. Dipsychus, a man of two souls, is introspective, intellectual, reserved, and sensitive. Of a passive temperament, he would rather, Hamlet-like, philosophize than act. He is contrasted with the Spirit, whom he calls "thou cursed spirit", "Mephistopheles", "this filthy Belial", and "The Power of this World! hateful unto God".

Like Clough himself, Dipsychus is conscious of the things of the spirit, yet haunted always by doubts of the truth or worth of the higher and nobler promptings. Yearnings of the Youth's better part for emancipation from the degrading influence of the "cursed spirit" are expressed by:

> O moon and stars, forgive! and thou, clear heaven,
> Look pureness back into me. Oh, great God!
> . . . . . .
> Why did I ever one brief moment's space
> But parley with this filthy Belial?[1]

But the tempter answers to inquire if he, with his talents and his wealth, will throw himself away in pieties which the world will call weak effeminacy. The spirit says:

> Come, them,
> And with my aid go into good society.
> Life little loves, 'tis true, this peevish piety;
> E'en they with whom it thinks to be securest --
> Your most religious, delicatest, purest --
> Discern, and show as pious people can
> Their feeling that you are not quite a man.[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 74.
2. Ibid., p. 75.

Who are the pious people? Not the strong men. Not the men of the world;

> But country folks who live beneath
> The shadow of the steeple;
> The parson and the parson's wife,
> And mostly married people;
>
> Youths green and happy in first love,
> So thankful for illusion;
> And men caught out in what the world
> Calls guilt, in first confusion;
>
> And almost every one when age,
> Disease, or sorrows strike him,
> Inclines to think there is a God,
> Or something very like Him.[1]

Frank and honest perplexity marks Clough's early poems. He desires a constant heart, but finds it must be fickle. For a little space he despairs of finding the truth he seeks. And in this despair he would return to oblivion, to wrap the draperies of his couch about him, and calls on Mother Night to hide him. But this feeling does not remain overlong. He shrugs his shoulders, says if the gods are deceitful so be it. He seeks to recapture the gift of song "to fill the golden urns of verse."[2] He contemplates action. But he does not act because he does not have sure knowledge.

Duty and God occupy the thought of Clough in Ambarvalia, his second published volume. (The first published work, The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, was a

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1. Ibid., p. 89.
2. Supra, p. 29.

pleasing pastoral, dealing with incidents happening to a group of Oxford students on a vacation party in the Highlands of Scotland.) Three representative poems were chosen from Ambarvalia: "The New Sinai"--reject priestly doctrines; "Qui Laborat, Orat" -- Keep God within the sanctuary; "Song of Songs" -- if God is within the heart, what matter what God is?

It may be that Dipsychus represents Clough's inmost heart. When we read it, we are fixed with the thought that perhaps believing makes sublime thoughts true. In any event, believing ennobles man and sustains him with hope.

B. PROSE

The published prose of Clough is not voluminous. But the writing, some from lectures or for reviews, was thoughtfully done. Ten prose items were collected by Clough's widow for publication in a volume with his letters. A second volume of the work contains the poetry he wrote.

His lecture "On the Poetry of Wordsworth" contains the much-quoted criticism: "...He is apt to wind up his short pieces with reflections upon the way in which, hereafter, he expects to reflect upon his present reflections...."[1] "A Passage upon Oxford Studies" was printed in the North American Review of April, 1853.

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1. Poems and Prose Remains, Vol. 1, p. 319

A "Lecture on the Development of English Literature from Chaucer to Wordsworth" was delivered in 1852. The North American Review published in July, 1853, Clough's review of some poems by Alexander Smith and Matthew Arnold.

Two of the prose items are of especial interest because of the light they throw upon the thought of Clough in his maturer years. These are first, the review of Francis William Newman's "The Soul"; second, "Notes on the Religious Tradition."

1. Review of Mr. Newman's "The Soul."

Clough's own words, in his review of Francis William Newman's "The Soul: Its Sorrows and Aspirations," indicate his tendency toward scepticism. The review was written in 1849, the year Clough became head of University Hall, London. Newman was retiring head.

Some of Clough's observations on this occasion follow:

> ...On two points at least, and one of them is the fundamental proposition of this book, Mr. Newman may hope for ample sympathy. In the name of more than one individual we beg to tender him ours. Most grateful must many souls be for the serious and religious expression which here is given them of the conviction, that not in dictionaries and chronicles, nor yet in traditions and articles, is our religion to be sought: our faith must not rest on historical facts, however strongly attested, not on theological articles, however ancient and venerable, not on any written semper, ubique, ab omnibus, but on the instincts of the spiritual sense, on the demands of the spiritual nature. Our gospel must not be after man, neither received of man, nor taught: the abiding revelation is written, not on hard tables of stone, legal, historic, or dogmatic, but on the fleshy tablets of the human heart and conscience. The Kingdom of God is within us.

> This is Mr. Newman's fundamental doctrine, his first and great commandment, a gnothi seauton which descends from heaven -- Believe thine own soul....
>
> Believe thine own soul. This first and great commandment we welcome. But the details of the second, which is like unto it, and all the intricacies of the law and prophets that hang thereon, we confess ourselves hardly prepared to investigate. How far and in what precise sense the freedom of will, the personal existence of God, &c, &c, are discoverable in the human soul as intuitive principles, axioms of spiritual theory, and postulates of conscience, essential for solution of all future human theorems and problems, is a matter perhaps beyond the limits of the reviewer's province. We presume neither to doubt nor to dogmatize.[1]

And again, Clough continues:

> ...Let there be priests, if you please, to preserve the known, and let them, as is their office, magnify their office, and say, It is all. But there shall also be priests to vindicate the unknown; nor shall it be counted presumption in them to maintain, -- It is not all.[2]

The selections from this review indicate the religious philosophy of Clough; also they point out the tendency of his critics to hold up for inspection those ideas which coincide with their own. Clough and Newman are one in their assertion that religion must not rest upon "dictionaries and chronicles", nor "traditions and articles", but on "the instincts of the spiritual sense", on "the demands of the spiritual nature".

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1. Ibid., pp. 295-6.
2. Ibid., p. 302

2. Notes on the Religious Tradition

In one of his unpublished manuscripts, called "Notes on the Religious Tradition," Clough further endeavors to clarify his religious and ethical thinking. He declares that, although he has not seen God, that is no proof there may not be a supreme being. But he continues with the thought that the comfort which may be gained by taking refuge in the infallibility of the church at Rome, the legends of the saints, and the tales of modern miracles may not justify him in ignoring doubts presented by science and by history.

His conclusion in this instance is:

> ...I do believe that, strive as I will, I am restricted, and grasp as I may, I can never hold the complete truth.[1]

Although Clough did not leave a considerable volume of prose writing, that which he did leave is indicative of his stand on moral and religious matters. This stand proclaims no dogmatic theology whatever. It does affirm the love of man, the dignity of the soul, and the worth of the innermost thoughts of man.

C. LETTERS

It was part of Clough's intellectual honesty that his

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1. Ibid., p. 425.

letters to his friends were frank to the point of sharing with his correspondents his inmost soul, his private thoughts, his groping and searching for the light.

To J. N. Simkinson, a Rugby schoolmate who went on to Trinity College, Cambridge, and was afterwards an assistant master at Harrow, Clough wrote, in a letter dated August 27, 1840:

> That I have been a good deal unsettled in mind at times at Oxford, and that I have done a number of foolish things, is true enough....[1]

To his sister, Anne, he wrote, after failing to obtain a first class in the schools, in a letter dated June 6, 1841:

> ...Neither must you think that it is about my class that I have been bothered during the last year....[2]

That his religious struggle obsessed Clough nearly to the point of getting away from it all, at least for a time, may be seen in his letter of October 8, 1843, to J. P. Gell, a Rugby boy who went to Trinity and later taught in Tasmania:

> I do not think I am particularly inclined to become a Puseyite,[3] though it is very likely my Puseyite position may prevent my becoming anything else; and I am ruminating, in the hope of escaping these terrible alternatives, a precipitate flight from Oxford....[4]

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1. Ibid., p. 86.
2. Ibid., p. 87.
3. Supra., p. 13.
4. Poems and Prose Remains, Vol. I, p. 89.

To this same friend, on July 13, 1844, Clough wrote:

> I believe my last letter was written at the end of last long vacation. I remember I was at that time in doubt about signing the Articles; I did, however, sign them, though reluctantly enough, and I am not quite sure whether or not in a justifiable sense....[1]

Four months later Clough sought to justify his signing of the Articles in a long letter to Mr. Gell. Pertinent to the point are these words, written at Oriel on November 25:

> ...My own justification to myself for doing as I am doing is, I fear, one which would be as little approved of by you as my objections on the other hand. However, it is simply that I can feel faith in what is being carried on by my generation, and that I am content to be an operative -- ... But this almost cuts me out from having any religion whatever; if I begin to think about God, there arise a thousand questions, and whether the thirty-nine Articles answer them at all, or whether I should not answer them in the most diametrically opposite purport, is a matter of great doubt....
>
> Without in the least denying Christianity, I feel little that I can call its power....Sometimes I have doubts whether it won't turn out to be no Christianity at all.[2]

It was not until December, 1848, four years after the writing of the letter quoted above, that Clough spoke out about his creed -- of a sort. That it is a moral creed, there can now be no question. But that it was orthodox for Victorian England is a matter of conjecture. He was writing to his sister, Anne, a month after he had given up his fellowship at Oxford:

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1. Ibid., p. 91-2.
2. Ibid., p. 94-5.

> It is far nobler to teach people to do what is good because it is good simply, than for the sake of any future reward. It is, I dare say, difficult to keep up an equal religious feeling at present, but it is not impossible, and it is necessary. Besides, if we die and come to nothing it does not therefore follow that life and goodness shall cease to be in earth and heaven.... There's a creed which will suffice for the present.[1]

On January 4, 1849, Clough addressed a letter to the authorities of University Hall, London, following his appointment as head after resigning his Fellowship and Tutorship at Oriel. In this letter he requested to be relieved of any public appearance at prayers, but he would be pleased to attend as a private person. He made this request with the explanation that he had sentiments, if not convictions, on this subject.

After three quiet years, during which he had met Blanche Smith, who was to become his wife, and after he had resigned from the headship at University Hall, because of the drudgery of life there, but before his departure for America, Clough again revealed a bit of his credo, this time to his old friend Thomas Arnold, Matthew's brother. The letter is dated January, 1852:

> I certainly am free to tell you that while I do fully think that the Christian religion is the best, or perhaps the only really good religion that has appeared, on the other hand, as to how it appeared, I see all possible doubt. Whether Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote the gospels, is profoundly dubious. St. Paul wrote his epistles, I should think, pretty

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1. Ibid., p. 138.

> certainly, but he had seen next to nothing.... The whole origin of Christianity is lost in obscurity: of the facts are to be believed, it is simply on trust, because the religion of which they profess to be the origin is a good one. But its goodness is not proved by them; we find it out for ourselves... Such is my present feeling.... But I don't urge it on any one, except when I am specially asked....[1]

Clough had met Blanche Smith in the summer of 1851. Their correspondence was intermittent until the following January, when Clough for a time penned on the average a letter a week until their engagement was announced before the poet sailed for America in October, 1852. Much of the content of Clough's letters to his future wife related his hopes and fears of boyhood, his school life, and his dreams. On the third of April he opened his heart with:

> ...It is odd that I was myself in a most Romanizing frame of mind yesterday, which I very rarely am. I was attracted by the spirituality of it. But what has hitherto always come before me as the truth is rather that --
>
> It seems His newer will,
> We should not think at all of Him, but turn,
> And of the world that He has given us make
> The best we can.[2]

The questioning spirit manifest in Clough's early

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1. Ibid., p. 171-172.
2. Ibid., p. 176. This is from Dipsychus.

poetry continued throughout his life. The doubt remained. But it was a kindly and tentative doubt--a doubt which he would have been willing to disavow upon the receiving of more light. But not enough light came.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary and Conclusion

Dominated by mother-love in his early years, Clough did not react as many a boy is known to have done --become as hard as nails. Instead, Clough became more conscientious and idealistic the more closely he remained at his mother's side. God and Duty were drilled into Clough by his mother, who was herself affectionate, clinging, and womanly.

Clough was turned over to Dr. Arnold of Rugby in the eleventh year of his childhood, to be kindly and firmly and prematurely inducted into manhood, to continue to learn to "do good" and to strive ever for the highest. Dr. Arnold had set for himself the task of leadership rather than of command. He succeeded in breaking down the long-standing hostility between boys and masters. He brought Clough, along with some other favored boys, to the point of imitating his own character and conduct, of thinking as he did about the duties and opportunities of the school.

From this milieu, Clough went up to Oxford to make it over in the image of Arnold and found a stronger master that his former teacher in power there. Newman was at the height of his reign, and the Tractarian Movement was stirring. Newman's insistence on the Church as the final authority in matters of faith ran counter to Arnold's professed thesis that the still small voice of the individual conscience was the validating principle of faith. Torn between these two diverse theories, Clough's boyhood faith, learned at his mother's knee, wavered. And

boyhood faith wavered. But the combined influences of Matthew Arnold and Ralph Waldo Emerson were helpful to Clough. These influences did not give him complete poise. But they were helpful in making it possible for him to work out a philosophy which resulted in a pure and beautiful spirit who through all his waverings never wavered in his love for all things honest, lovely, and good.

Clough's poetry, prose, and letters were replete with evidence that these strong personalities were major moulders of his ideals and of his life, as indicated in chapter two above.

What have critics to say who claim that Clough was a product chiefly of his age? Anna Swanwick has written:

> The stupendous discoveries of modern science, revealing areas of time and space appalling to the imagination, have also been influential in disturbing religious convictions, based upon theories of the universe and of human history which are now exploded; while the permanent and unvarying order pervading the vast realms of nature has thrown discredit upon the popular conception of miracles, as a violation of universal law. Many of the old foundations of the religious life have thus been undermined, it is not surprising that many seekers after Truth, feeling themselves compelled to relinquish their belief in an authoritative Revelation, yet unwilling to resign their religious convictions, should have passionately yearned for some firmer basis upon which to rest their belief in the great spiritualities of the unseen world.... For a time Clough was carried away in the direction of the new

> opinions; yet in his mind the disturbance was but temporary. His own nature before long reasserted itself, -- stillm when the torrent subsided, he found that, not only had it swept away the new views which had been presented to him by the leaders of the Romanizing movement, but also that it had shaken the whole foundation of his early faith, and had forced him to rely upon his own endeavours in search after that truth which he still firmly believed in.... Having lost faith alike in his older and his newer creed, he had, from his mental constitution, peculiar difficulty in forming for himself any satisfactory conception of the great invisible realities....[1]

That there were stupendous advances in science is granted. That these advances influenced Clough to a degree is practically certain. But that these advances must necessarily have had the greatest influence upon Clough is denied. Emerson, Arnold, and Newman were aware of and influenced by the scientific, political, economic, and religious turmoil of the day. It is claimed that this turmoil played its part in Clough's tendency toward scepticism--in his losing of the old faith and the new.

This was not necessarily so. Macaulay and Dickens, two effective voices of the mid-Nineteenth century, , were not noted for doubt and timidity. Nor were Carlyle and John Stuart Mill devoid of strong convictions and the courage of these convictions.

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1. Anna Swanwick, Poets the Interpreters of Their Age. George Bell & Sons, London, 1892, p. 369.

The middle of the nineteenth century in England presented the spectacle of people busily getting things done. The inventions of Watt, Cartwright, Trevithick, and Geogge Stephenson in the first fifteen years of the century had led to an enormous expansion of the factory system and means of locomotion. Improvements in agriculture resulted in varied diet for the "beef-eaters" and "chaw-bacons". Britain became undoubted mistress of the seas at the great naval victory at Cape Trafalgar with Admiral Nelson's defeat of the combined Spanish and French fleets on October 21, 1805.

But when we have said this, we have not said everything about the Victorian period. It was an age of smugness, of bustle and activity, of scientific advance, of maritime expansion, of political reform. It was an age of belief, as well as an age of doubt. And in this age, Clough chose the most universal and timeless problems for his own: the nature of friendship and love and marriage and parenthood, the service of God and fellow service.

Clough was certainly not a product of his age in this: his disposition to sit forever mulling over large problems he could not solve instead of ignoring them for little problems he could solve. Clough did use nineteenth century settings. His long narrative poems are about people of his own time, as are the stories his lyrics suggest. It was in this respect that he was one with

It is not overlooked that every age sets limitations. But Clough's limitations -- his doubt and scepticism -- were not imposed entirely by the age, but by his combined nature and nurture. His conscientious nature and the influence of persons near to him and beloved by him set their mark upon him, limited his output, guided his thinking.

Another critic has remarked:

> ...He found on his hands a large mass of new knowledge which emotionally he was unable to absorb....[1]

Still another writes:

> ...Lowell, in 1871, uttered concerning Clough a prophesy, of which the phrases are well known: "Clough will be thought a hundred years hence," he wrote, "to have been the truest expression in verse of the moral and intellectual tendencies, the doubt and struggle towards settled conviction, of the period in which he lived."[2]

And again:

> ...Arnold's friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, is overwhelmed by the same doubts and fears; for him the voyage of life is a mystery of which the beginning and the end are alike dark....[3]

The late Lewis Edward Gates, one-time Harvard professor, in a retrospect of "English Literature of the Nineteenth Century," published in The Critic, has written, in part:

> By 1824 the Romantic impulse pure and simple had in poetry very nearly spent its creative force....Great as were the gains that accrued to the human spirit from the Romanticist's passionate questing after new experience of all

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1. William Henry Hudson, Studies in Interpretation, George P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1896, p. 94.
2. H. W. Garrod, Poetry and the Criticism of Life, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1931, p. 110.
3. John W. Cunliffe, Leaders of the Victorian Revolution, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1934, p. 155.

> sorts, the limitations of Romantic genius, and its dangerous eccentricities, became clearer and clearer as this genius worked itself out into thorough expression. The Romanticists were web-spinners and fancy-mongers.... They were beauty-blind and music-deaf. They lived inside their own individual heads, in the circle of their own personalities....Romantic dreamers were victims of their own maggots, so it seemed to the common-sense onlooker;...Their poetry was the expression of brooding loneliness and concerned their own relations to God and to Nature, not their relations to their fellows....One cannot but sympathize with Matthew Arnold's impatient outcry over Shelley's droll domesticity....A persistent striving to secure a synthesis between the Ideal and the Actual is characteristic of the poetry of the post-Romantic period.
>
> Clough was a bungling workman in verse. He must nearly always be read with allowances. And yet his poetry is historically of high interest because of its sensitive reflection of the spirit of his age....His "Dipsychus" is a delicately sure, analytic record, half-lyrical and half-dramatic, of the typical moods of sad recollection, distrust, hesitation, and final acquiescence, with which many men of his day who had listened long to the music of romantic poetry, turned back at last from vague dreaming and laid hold of the tasks of conventional life....[1]

Clough was not the first, nor will he be the last, to find on his hands a large mass of new knowledge and be unable to absorb it. Clough and other Victorian poets hold no monopoly in regard to this universal characteristic.

Lowell's prophesy, too, seems not to have been proved. It is not to be denied that in general the swing in literary tastes is from the Romantic to the Classical and vice versa as the pendulum passes that point beyond which general good

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1. Lewis F. Gates, The Critic, "English Literature of the Nineteenth Century," February, 1900, pp. 172-174.

taste wishes to follow. But there are individuals who in an age of Classicism are incurably Romantic. They are not Romantic because the age is otherwise. No more must writers of a Classical or Realistic temper become that way because the larger proportion of their contemporaries are that way, also. It is conceivable that in all ages there are individuals whose bent remains what it is because of the individuality of the person himself. Ovid was a Romanticist in a Classical age. In an age of Romanticism, Chaucer could well be classified as a Realist.

This study has traced the personal influences which were important in Clough's life, especially during the developmental period. These influences, upon a boy of sensitive and attentive nature, formed a character whose good sense perhaps rested upon vicarious experiences. This developed in the conscientious nature of the boy a firm desire to do right. But when he found that to do right in the eyes of Newman was a different matter than it was to his mother and to his first masterful teacher, Dr. Arnold, there developed a perplexity which his short lifetime could not resolve. A desire to know all the facts before venturing upon an answer to a question could not fail to make such a man as Clough a doubter, whatever the age in which he lived.

APPENDIX

COPY

Frederick G. Blair, F. S. A.,
Master & Librarian.
Telephone No. Royal 7770.

The Athenaeum,
Liverpool, 1.

FGB/DD

11th August, 1950.

Eugene E. Smith, Esq.,
Box, 4634,
University Station,
Arizona.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 27th July, addressed to Mr. George T. Shaw, was received by me to-day, and in reply I have to say that Mr. Shaw died in 1938, and I am his successor in the office of Librarian of this Institution. I regret that I am unable to render you any help in the matter of Arthur Hugh Clough, as in the light of recent research some doubt has been cast as to the authenticity of his birth-place in Rodney Street, Liverpool. In support of this statement I would refer you to a paper in the Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancs. and Cheshire, Vol. 83, page 78. in which the whole matter of Clough's birth-place is discussed. You will, I have no doubt, be able to obtain this volume from any of the principle Libraries in the United States. If, in view of what I have said, you still wish me to obtain a photograph I should be glad if you would inform me. In the meantime I return you cheque and await your further instructions.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) Frederick G. Blair

Master & Librarian.

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